

COUNTING PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The 2010 Census will be a count of everyone living in the United States, including people experiencing homelessness. Mandated by the U.S. Constitution, Census data are used to apportion Congressional seats to states, to distribute more than \$400 billion in federal funds to local, state and tribal governments each year and to make decisions about what community services to provide. The 2010 Census questionnaire will be one of the shortest in history. Strict confidentiality laws protect the confidentiality of respondents and the information they provide.

Counting people experiencing homelessness presents one of the more significant challenges faced by the Census Bureau. Plans are in place to ensure that this segment of the American populace is included in the count. Some members of the homeless population will be picked up in the traditional Census forms. However, to ensure that there is a complete count, Census has developed a special Service-Based Enumeration operation specifically designed to count people who might be missed during the traditional count of housing units and group quarters.

The special Service-Based Enumeration program will be conducted over three days at the end of March, 2010 at various facilities identified by Census, advocacy organizations, and local partners.

- On Monday, March 29, 2010, Census workers will conduct a count at emergency and transitional shelters with sleeping facilities;
- On Tuesday, March 30, 2010, Census workers will conduct a count at soup kitchens and regularly scheduled mobile food vans; and
- On Wednesday, March 31, 2010, Census workers will conduct a count at pre-identified outdoor locations such as encampments of tents underneath highway overpasses or bridges and other identified geographic areas where members of the homeless population are known to be living.

Although specific dates have been designated for counting at the different types of facilities, service providers will be given the flexibility to have the count at their facility conducted on any one of the three days scheduled.

People experiencing homelessness counted during the special Service-based program will be included in the overall population count. The Census Bureau will not provide a count of the population experiencing homelessness. However, the Census Bureau will provide a count of people enumerated at emergency and transitional shelters with sleeping facilities.